STUDY PROJECT

AOE: EXCELLENCE OR EMPTINESS

BY

LIEUTENANT COLONEL GALE N. SMITH

29 MARCH 1988

U.S. ARMY WAR COLLEGE, CARLISLE BARRACKS, PA 17013-5050

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE (When Data Entered)

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

READ INSTRUCTIONS BEFORE COMPLETING FORM

1. REPORT NUMBER	2. GOVT ACCESSION NO. / 3. RECIPIENT'S CATALOG NUMBER
4. TITLE (and Subtitle): "AOE: EXCELLENCE OR EMPTINESS"	5. TYPE OF REPORT & PERIOD COVERED: Study Project
	6. PERFORMING ORG. REPORT NUMBER
7. AUTHOR(s): Lieutenant Colonel Gale N. Smith	8. CONTRACT OR GRANT NUMBER(s)
9. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME AND ADDRESS: U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA 17013-5050	10. PROGRAM ELEMENT, PROJECT, TASK AREA & WORK UNIT NUMBERS
11. CONTROLLING OFFICE NAME AND ADDRESS: Same	12. REPORT DATE: 29 March 1988
	13. NUMBER OF PAGES: 28
14. MONITORING AGENCY NAME & ADDRESS(if different from Controlling Office)	15. SECURITY CLASS. (of this report): UNCLASSIFIED
	15a. DECLASSIFICATION/DOWNGRADING SCHEDULE

16. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of this Report)

Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.

17. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT (of the abstract entered in Block 20, if different from Report)

18. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

19. KEY WORDS (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number)

20. ABSTRACT (Continue on reverse side if necessary and identify by block number)

This article addresses controversial issues relating to the Army of Excellence (AOE). The intent is to open a dialogue for professional discourse regarding the merits of the changes made. The focus of the paper is a discussion of the methodology used to develop AOE and of the capability that resulted. The question of credibility is pursued. The root concern is whether AOE created an organization of excellence or one that is too empty to meet the threat. From this point, arguments are presented to discern the driving force behind AOE--a

(continued)

DD FORM 1 JAN 73 1473 EDITION OF 1 NOV 65 IS OBSOLETE

Unclassified

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE (When Data Entered)

ABSTRACT--continued.

well thought-out operational concept requirement or the need to remain within resource constraints.

CLASSIFICATION (U)

USAWC MILITARY STUDIES PROGRAM PAPER

AOE: EXCELLENCE OR EMPTINESS

An Individual Study Project
Intended for Publication

by

Lieutenant Colonel Gale N. Smith

Colonel Leonard D. Hardy Jr
Project Advisor

U.S. Army War College
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013
29 March 1989

CLASSIFICATION (U)

ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: Gale N. Smith, LTC, AR

TITLE: AOE: Excellence or Emptiness

FORMAT: Individual Study Intended for Publication

DATE: 29 March 1988 PAGES: 26 CLASSIFICATION: Unclassified

This article addresses controversial issues relating to the Army of Excellence (AOE). The intent is to open a dialogue for professional discourse regarding the merits of the changes made. The focus of the paper is a discussion of the methodology used to develop AOE and of the capability that resulted. The question of credibility is pursued. The root concern is whether AOE created an organization of excellence or one that is too empty to meet the threat. From this point, arguments are presented to discern the driving force behind AOE -- a well thought-out operational concept requirement or the need to remain within resource constraints.

INTRODUCTION

From inception the Army of Excellence (AOE) has evoked professional discussion at all levels and from all quarters. The focus of the dialogue is on the methodology used to create the organization and the capability that resulted. The question is whether AOE created an organization of excellence or one that is too empty to meet the threat. The debate is less emotional now with a few exceptions; however, the topic is still open for review.

After four-plus years an assessment is appropriate to examine the merits of the arguments. This article will address the credibility of the AOE process and the question of excellence or emptiness. The issue is whether AOE was based on a well thought-out operational concept requirement or the need to remain within resource constraints. The credibility issue will be examined first, followed by the case for excellence and the case for emptiness. Additionally, alternatives to AOE will be presented for the reader's consideration.

BACKGROUND

A review of circumstances is necessary to understand why AOE was developed. The U. S. Army was neglected in the post Viet Nam era of the late 1970s. During this period of transition from war to peace, national resources were allocated against other priorities. As a result, modernization efforts lagged

behind, training money was limited and doctrine was suspect. The institution was being challenged both from within and from without.

The decade of the 1980s began with new a national leadership and a new focus for America. The Reagan administration made major commitments to modernize the U S armed forces and to give them a credible readiness posture. For the Army's share, modernization programs were accelerated. Major weapons systems such as the M1 tank, Bradley fighting vehicle, Blackhawk and Apache helicopters, and Pershing II missile were fielded. More money was placed in the Operation and Maintenance Army (OMA) account for training. The National Training Center came on line. With a renewed interest toward conventional war, the focus of doctrine shifted from the tactical to the operational level. The Army began implementing the Army 86 organization structure and design. Many other less apparent but important things were occurring. Patriotism was returning to the national character and service in the Army was becoming more acceptable to the citizens.

Things were so good in the early part of the decade that one was tempted to think it would never end. However, it did end. Midway through the first term of the Reagan administration, the priorities on the national agenda began to change. Phil Gramm, a Democratic Representative from Texas, made headlines when he resigned his seat in Congress, became a Republican and was re-elected. Two years later, he ran for the Senate seat being vacated by John Tower and was elected. His message was that our

country should learn to live within its means. His resolve garnered support. Many in Congress felt that the Defense Department had been given enough resources to overcome the years of neglect. The focus became one of lowering the ever growing national deficit and of shrinking the balance of trade.

From a readiness perspective, Senior Army leaders, too, questioned the effectiveness of our efforts. They raised numerous issues. There was a perception that the Army was "hollow." Force structure was not fleshed out and units were assigned multiple missions in different theaters of operation. Force strategic mobility in response to crisis on the low side of the spectrum of conflict (low intensity conflict or LIC) was another concern.[1]

These issues and concerns were discussed at the Army Commanders' Conference of August 1983. As a result, the Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) was tasked to study the concerns and to report findings by October 1983. Guidance from the Army Staff included the following:

* Force designs would not exceed programmed end strength of 781,000.
* Determine if manning the Army at Authorized Level of Organization (ALO) 2 was possible.
* Develop a light division to respond to the LIC threat.
* Recommend heavy division design reductions to make it more maneuverable by centralizing assets at echelons above division.
* Re-design corps and echelons above corps (EAC) to improve their warfighting capability.

The study results became the nucleus for AOE. Of note, the name was coined because the Army's theme for the year was "Excellence."[2]

The Combined Arms Center was the action agent for the study group, which was comprised of representatives from the Army Staff, the TRADOC schools and centers, Headquarters FORSCOM, and other major commands. A compressed and accelerated version of the TRADOC force design process, Concept Based Requirements System (CBRS), provided the framework for the study.

Following guidance, the Light Infantry Division (LID) was designed first. The charter was to keep the LID design to about ten thousand spaces. This let the study group know how many spaces that heavy forces would have to give up. The LID design was followed by the design for heavy forces, corps and echelons above corps (EAC). Existing studies, such as Army 86 and the Logistics Unit Productivity Study (LUPS) from the Logistics Center, were used as the base line.[3]

For a point of reference, two terms used by the study group must be understood. Force structure and force design are processes which result from the study of and need to meet an operational requirement. Force structure refers to the number and type of units, i.e., divisions, battalions, etc. Force design refers to the make-up of the specific unit, i.e., number of platoons in a company, etc.[4] Both are a result of the CBRS process.

AOE PROCESS CREDIBILITY

The guidance, abbreviated CBRS process and the short time for study have all contributed to the problem of AOE credibility. Each of these elements taken in isolation appears to be sound.

However, a closer look reveals flaws which contribute to the debate of excellence or emptiness. The parameters that limited the study group's scope suggest that a motivation other than an operational need was at work.

The guidance is the root cause for the credibility issue because it appears to have ignored the CBRS process. CBRS posits that an operational requirement is developed into a concept. A mission area analysis is conducted to determine validity and to identify needs - doctrine, organization, training, or materiel. The result of analysis causes something to happen in one or more of the need areas.[5]

How does the AOE guidance match up with CBRS? Doctrine was not the driving force. The Army promulgated Airland Battle doctrine in 1982. The thrust was a commitment to an evolving operational level of warfighting. The Army 86 study complemented doctrine and provisioned for a robust fighting force capable of sustained combat. Training was not an issue. It is driven by organizational design and doctrine. The Army Training and Evaluation Program (ARTEP) was well on the way to implementation. Training money had been an issue in the 1970's but not in 1983. Accelerated fielding programs kept materiel from being an issue. Where the Army was reluctant, Congress mandated materiel buys to keep programs going. Congressional motivation was primarily political; however, the result was that materiel was plentiful.

By deduction, organization became the focus. The question invariably is why. One argument is that the Army leadership wanted to create spaces for the light division force structure.

Another theme is that there was an operational need for light forces. This thought suggested the need for a force capable of being deployed strategically to non-European theaters.

Without regard for motive, three valid points were raised. Firstly, the heavy divisions appeared too large to be viable maneuver forces. The support tail was not very mobile and many functions were redundant at corps level. Secondly, units were assigned to too many warfighting commands simultaneously. In effect, this tended to invalidate theater war plans. Planned forces may not have been available in event of hostilities in more than one theater. Thirdly, a number of units, which were included in war plans, didn't exist except as a designation on paper.

War planners had not considered the long lead time necessary to bring these forces on line. These were not new issues. These matters were similar to lessons learned as a result of Nifty Nugget 1978 regarding mobilization. For example, there were gaps in planning for mobilization sites; definitive priority of movement to ports of embarkation did not exist; routes of movement, etc., were suspect. These points, as well as the anomaly of forces available, should have been addressed long before by the Joint Staff or Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). Planners should have known these so called "paper" units could not help except in a long war scenario. The time required to form, equip, train and transport them to a theater of operation would be lengthy. While this is a resource question of another nature, it is a major consideration in the "hollow" force argument.

From the national level, planners saw an organizational shortcoming. The probability of fighting is greater on the lower end of the spectrum of conflict outside of NATO commitments. As such, there was a need to design a force capable of going to the fight. The matter of heavy force mobility is linked to this point. Inasmuch as heavy forces were tailored for the NATO battle, a smaller, lighter fighting force was necessary to fill the strategic void. Army 86 heavy forces had too much support baggage to enable a timely response to a non-European crisis. This, therefore, became the rationale to justify the LIDs. Subsequent discussions, however, have espoused an expanded role to include LIDs in the NATO theater war plans, too.

The restriction of keeping the new force structure within the active duty end strength is not compatible with CBRS. The strength limitation forced the designers to confine the scope of their designs. They were constrained by resources and not the needs dictated by an operational concept or mission area analysis. There is no analytical evidence to support the imposed restriction. The decision was made by Senior Army leaders for reasons other than a documented operational need. The end strength cap meant the only way to get spaces was to take them from within the existing structure. These spaces were gained at the expense of the rest of the tactical Army. By guidance, the heavy division was reduced and became a manpower space bill payer. Other spaces were gained by transferring functions to relatively unconstrained reserve components and by relying on host nation support.

The host nation support assumption is a critical point which may be the Achilles heel in the long term. Basing rights, over-flight permission, use of ports, etc., require political commitment. As was noted during the raid on Libya in 1986, this is a difficult task even with strong allies.

The shortened CBRS process leads one to suspect the product on grounds of conscious omission. A key component of CBRS is the mission area analysis. Theoretically, the need for light forces could have been or should have been justified through this process. There is no evidence to indicate that this is so. The light forces were justified by Army guidance. Assuming the need for light forces is justified, the force structure mix, i.e., light verses heavy, appears to be off balance. If Europe remains the top responsibility, the number of light divisions provided is suspect. Light forces require relatively large Corps support plugs to sustain operations. The question from a strategic view, therefore, must be whether these units are any more mobile than a mechanized unit. This is a relevant point when one considers the fleet of fast ships (RL-7s) now available to move a heavy force.

The brief time frame available to undertake such a massive study of the Total Army is questionable on its merits. A quasi-mission area analysis had been conducted before the study group gathered at Ft. Leavenworth. This was the analysis used to support the baseline studies, Army 86, etc. However, the methodology used by the study group was driven by resource constraints and not operational need.[6]

The key point is that the AOE process was constrained by plan. Fundamentally, the tenets of CBRS were present and used albeit diminished in scope. A phrase is bandied about to justify the guidance and process, "constrained resource environment." This thought lacks merit because this has always been the case. By most accounts this will always be the case and will remain a valid assumption in the future.

THE CASE FOR EXCELLENCE

Given the guidance and restrictions, the AOE study group did a yeomanly effort. What began as a feasibility study, ended as an unsurpassed re-look at the Total Army.[7] The positive points are numerous. The study developed an affordable force structure. The most significant point is the planned realignment of "real" units with operational war plans. Theater specific unit packages were designed to meet doctrinal and war plan requirements. "Paper" units were scrubbed and shortcomings were identified to war planners. As mentioned earlier, War Plan review at the JCS level is important to insure a true picture of warfighting capability. This may be a weak link but is now being given renewed life with the JCS reorganization.

Combat capability has increased substantially. Division force structure increased. More combat maneuver units, both air and ground, were added. Tables of Organization and Equipment (TOEs), that were developed, were realistic and were fleshed out by personnel managers. Support units were aligned more closely with specific supported units. This made war plans more tenable.

Division force structure was increased from twenty-four under Army 86 to twenty-eight with AOE. Ten of the divisions are in the Army National Guard. Four of the twenty-eight divisions are light infantry, one of which is in the reserve component. Standardized active divisions have improved the tactical flexibility to task organize for mission need. Force structure and design fit the doctrinal requirements of Airland battle. Light force divisions contribute to deterrence though enhanced deployability. However, as mentioned earlier, this point can be argued.

Using division force equivalent (DFE) methodology, the increase of four divisions was achieved with a savings of 88 K spaces for the Total Army. DFE is the sum of divisional, non-divisional, and tactical support increments. The space required under Army 86 was 1,152 K compared to 1,064 K for AOE.[8] Figure 1 shows the space comparison.

Figure 1. DFE Methodology Comparison

Study	Div Incr	+	Non-Div Cbt Incr	+	Tac Spt Incr	=	DFE	x	No Div	=	Total
Army 86	16K	+	12K	+	20K	=	48K	x	24 Div	=	1152K
AOE	15.2K	+	9.3K	+	13.5K	=	38K	x	28 Div	=	1064K

The warfighting commands have a greatly enhanced force for planning. Nine more infantry battalions were created which brought 1026 more squads. Eight more armor battalions have added 790 more tanks. The artillery has forty fewer battalions but the number of tubes has increase by 824. 252 more missile launchers (MLRS) augment the indirect fire capability. Aviation assets have

increased by 14 more attack battalions and 38 more combat assault companies. However, aviation numbers may be adjusted downward when mandated budget cuts are made. Air defense assets include 360 more Stinger teams. Unit strength has been increased to a level of ALO 2 or better in active divisions. The net result is an increase of forty-five percent in combat capability when equipment is used as the measure.[9]

Combat support (CS) and combat service support (CSS) are theater specific and keyed to the number and type of combat forces. This effort is still being worked in the political arena because of the reserve component connection.[10]

THE CASE FOR EMPTINESS

Fundamentally, the argument for emptiness raises the point of AOE validity. As a result of AOE, major changes were made to the structure and design of the Army. AOE purportedly was a scrub of the entire tactical Army to determine: 1) the proper alignment of force structure with war plans; 2) a complete review of the Army structure and design to justify continued need; and 3) the fleshing out of the fielded structure. This was meant to fill the "hollow" Army.

The substance for the argument for emptiness will explore the areas where changes were made by AOE. Force structure raises several issues as does the topic of the placement of functional responsibilities. This is the question of active verses reserve component. Warfighting capability requires an ability to sustain operations over an expressed period of time. Without question,

this includes the ability to operate on a twenty-four hour basis.

In a purposeful way, changes in force structure were made at the expense of sustainment. In effect, the review of the Army structure was controlled by the need to find enough spaces to field light divisions. The expressed AOE process "resulted in identification of functions and associated personnel which were originally intended to provide resiliency, redundancy, and robustness...."[11] In other words, this was the capability to operate for extended periods. Systemically, a type of zero based personnel budgeting was used to determine the minimum spaces required to do functional tasks. By eliminating or transferring functions and redundancy, spaces were identified to be given up for new force structure.

Following strict guidance, proponent representatives determined where to achieve the space savings. Some were made in anticipation of labor savings of new equipment, i.e., MLRS, palletized loading system (PLS), etc., while others were judgment calls. Implied was a willingness to take risk in these areas. The issue is whether too much risk was taken by reducing the robustness of the tactical Army. Fleshing out units and evaluating capability has provided empirical data which suggests the risk may be too great. This point will be considered later.

The discussion of emptiness must begin with a look at the force structure piece. Consider the base question of how the number of twenty-eight divisions was reached. Is this the number needed by warfighting commands? The answer is both yes and no. If the United States fights the next war as a partner in a

coalition, the answer is probably yes. In this scenario, partner states share the burden of maintaining armed forces. If the war is fought alone, the answer is probably no. This scenario is very expensive and is avoided for the most part.

The difference between the minimum risk force and current force is a function of both points. Risk is acceptable because of coalition membership, i.e., NATO, etc. This allows partner states to resource competing domestic priorities. Debating this issue in an urclassified forum is useless. However, the number implies a need to prepare for the most probable war, a non-NATO war.

A more pertinent question is the mix of divisions between active and reserve components. Implied is the need to stay within the end strength limit regardless of operational need. Once again a resource vice operational constraint. The issue of light divisions applies here, too. Light forces were needed to fill the perceived void of strategically immobile or heavy forces.

Examine for a moment where the light divisions are in the Army's force structure. Three are in the active component and, one is in the reserve component. The obvious question is why put a light division in a force structure which is not meant to go to war earlier than D+30. How then does this meet the strategically deployable force criteria?

Looking further at the mobility criterion, why should reserve component divisions mirror the design of active divisions. Inasmuch as they will join the war in progress, do

they need the CS/CSS package of active divisions. The answer is unknown until an objective analysis is rendered. CBRS is a good framework to use for the task.

Presently, reserve component division design is wanting. Mechanized infantry divisions have one mechanized battalion, two tank battalions and seven infantry battalions.[12] The ability to fight maneuver warfare envisioned by Airland Battle doctrine is suspect.

One more point must be made before the subject of divisions is put to rest. What is the rationale for having seven different designs - mechanized, armored, infantry, airborne, motorized, light infantry, and air assault? If the airborne division is the strategic division, why light infantry? If light infantry is the strategic division model, why airborne forces? Once again this is an issue for objective analysis, CBRS. The recent decision to kill the armored gun system (AGS) makes the motorized division concept suspect. Assuming there is an operational need, the motorized division is another victim of resources.

Invariably, the discussion of ADE centers around the division force structure. The twenty-three separate brigade and five cavalry regiments are left out of the discussion. The CS/CSS necessary to keep these forces going is an expensive space consumer. If more combat power is needed, why not consolidate these resources. Another option is to consider their merit verses the need for resilient, robust force design in general.

The structure discussion sets the stage for the case of emptiness at the macro level. What are the micro issues? To answer the question, one must scrutinize where emphasis is placed, i.e., tactical Army, active, reserve, etc. The challenge is to keep the force oriented on fighting without sacrificing the support piece. Concerns from the field have helped to bring these and other problems of AOE into focus.

When one considers that the active force is limited by a 781,000 end strength. Sixty-six percent (514,288) of the active force is in the TOE Army. The remaining thirty-four percent is split equally between Table of Distribution and Allowance (TDA) units and non-material requirements (all others except TOE and TDA, TTHS, etc.)

As of the end of fiscal year 1987, the Total TOE Army strength was 1,195,063. Of this number, 680,775 or fifty-seven percent was in the reserve components. However, this is only part of the story. Sixty percent of the Army's combat service support structure is in the reserve components. Heavy reliance is being placed on the citizen-soldier force for this important function. By commodity area, a closer look reveals a clearer picture. Reserve component forces account for seventy-one percent of the maintenance troops; sixty-seven percent of the transportation troops; seventy-eight percent of quartermaster troops; forty-five percent of ordnance troops; forty-eight percent of logistic unit headquarters; and twenty-eight percent of aviation troops.[13]

Considering the complexity of the highly technical equipment fielded today, this support mission will be a challenge. Many of the soldiers tasked with these important missions have not supported front line active units. Given the resource restriction of available training time for reserve forces, one is forced to question this commitment.

Additionally, there is a peace time consideration, too. Support for active unit training is affected because the support redundancy is in the reserve force. Base or garrison logistics support has difficulty filling the void. As an example, Fort Carson has both a Corps level Support Group and a Depot level repair facility. When all three ground maneuver brigades train, the Division Support Command (DISCOM) is stretched. This is especially true because the training can be split between three sites: 1) Fort Carson training area, 2) Pinon Canyon Maneuver Site, 150 miles Southeast of post, and 3) the National Training Center (NTC). In this instance, the Support Group and the Post Depot repair facility supplement the DISCOM. However, the Capstone relationship is lacking and the war-time support relationship is not fostered.

As of January 1988, thirty-seven issues on AOE were being worked by the Combined Arms Combat Development Activity (CACDA). The primary source for issues is comment from the field regarding too few people to meet doctrinal tasks. The thirty-seven issues are broken out as follows. Two issues would return 636 spaces to the Army for use elsewhere. Three issues neither gain nor lose spaces and are zero sum space proposals. Fifteen issues have not

been worked sufficiently to determine space need. However, the operational need statements indicate an increased manpower space need. Sixteen issues have been studied enough to discern a significant space need.

The last issue is partially complete. Three force designs have been re-looked. A remarkable space need has been determined.[14] Plans are to look at at all other designs using similar methodology to discern the true extent of the problem.

The magnitude of manpower space need for the sixteen completed and the partially completed studies is staggering. The active component would need 22,845 spaces to meet perceived needs; the reserve component is short 13,894 spaces. These shortcomings are in force design without regard to structure.

Two examples illustrate the case that a lack of robustness has affected adversely the ability to implement doctrine. The first example is the size of infantry squads. This is a carry over from the Army 86 study where mechanized squads were reduced from ten to nine members. Eventually, nine became the standard for all squads.

The issue is to get more infantrymen in the fighting force. When the back ramp drops on a fighting vehicle, not very many fighters get out. By the time the vehicle driver and crew for the vehicle weapons are subtracted, six are left. Subtract the usual detractors - guard duty, illness, etc., and the problem is compounded. There is a proposal to increase mechanized squad size to ten members and all other to eleven. The personnel cost for this is 10,314 spaces (4212 for the active force and 6102 for

the reserve force).[14]

The second example posits that AOE maneuver companies lack the depth to perform sustained combat missions. Deficiencies exist in four areas: 1) robustness to man the fighting systems; 2) company command and control structure; 3) forward observer/fire support team (FO/FIST) interface with maneuver companies; and 4) the organization of support platoons. The cost to fix the problem is 4119 spaces for the active component and 3985 spaces for the reserve component. Figure 2 shows the personnel and equipment requirements needed to fix the problem.[15]

Figure 2. AOE company level deficiency fix

Unit (each)	Personnel	Equipment
Tank Company	6 enlisted	one M113
Mech Company	6 enlisted	one M2
Ground CAV Troop	5 enlisted	one M3
Tank SPT PLT	11 enlisted	
Mech SPT PLT	10 enlisted	
FA Battery	4 enlisted	
Air CAV Troop	6 enlisted	

The strongest case for emptiness is the extent to which AOE deviates from Manpower Authorization Requirements Criteria (MARC).[16] MARC is the bridge between force design and the implementing TOE. This is the guide TOE developers use to provide personnel spaces for tasks which are measurable by time and motion type study. Examples are mechanics, truck drivers, etc. Of note, MARC is the minimum number necessary to accomplish the task. That is to say all muscle and no fat. Regardless of the reasons, this is the area where TOE documenters and Senior

Army Leaders accepted risk. While an element of risk is expected, the consequence was not fully appreciated until the new unit designs were field tested. The task of reorganizing the entire Army may have been so great that decision-makers could not realize the true risk.

Of note, the original study group did not keep a tally of the deviations from MARC. Therefore, the risk aggregate was difficult to quantify. Recently, CACDA analyzed three heavy division designs to determine the extent of MARC deviation. Mechanized infantry battalion (M2), tank battalion (M1A1) and aviation brigade design models were evaluated. The risk accepted for these three type units alone is 5606 spaces (4398 active and 1208 reserve).[17] One suspects that the final tally will be even more revealing when all unit designs are scrubbed. This one point alone may explain the frustration with AOE and may contribute most to the perception of emptiness. Figure 3 illustrates the impact of MARC deviation on these three unit designs.

Figure 3. MARC deviations

Unit	Deviation	Aggregate Active	Aggregate Reserve
Mech Inf Bn (M2)	38	1710	228
Tank Bn (M1A1)	22	1188	484
Aviation Brigade		1500	496
Forward Deployed	186		
CONUS Based	124		
	TOTAL:	4398	1208

THE CASE FOR ALTERNATIVES

Two alternatives to AOE will be examined briefly; however, neither proposal was ever developed beyond the concept stage. They are examples of professional thought intent on making our Army a competent fighting force. Both were presented relatively early on in the implementation of AOE.

The first example is the Maneuver Oriented Corps - 1996 (MOC-96). This was a study conducted at the National Defense University during 1985-86. The second is one posited by Brigadier General (Ret) John C. Bahnsen. These are discussed from the perspective that they illustrate other viewpoints on the future of the Army. Both focus more on structure than design to meet needs at the operational level of war. Both intimate that AOE focused on the wrong issue - resources rather than operational need.

MOC-96 suggests a greater role for the corps. Divisions would be smaller and in greater numbers. More divisions would be created by modifying existing structure. Separate brigades, as such, would be eliminated. AOE division design strength would be reduced. The net effect is to create five MOC-96 divisions from three AOE divisions.

Regimental combat teams (RCTs) would be the center piece for tactical maneuver. Each would be somewhat self-sustaining and capable of independent operation. This is made possible by transferring force design and functions performed by the AOE division base. RCTs and corps become the recipients of the force structure and functions to enhance operational and tactical

flexibility.

The Corps plans for and fights the operational battle. Divisions become control headquarters and focus on the tactical mission. RCTs could be tasked organized under divisions or operate independently as required by the tactical need.[18]

General Bahnsen suggests a single heavy division design with the support base shifted to corps. He proposes combined arms maneuver units as opposed to mechanized or armor units. He also puts forth the idea that maneuver forces should be led by "mounted combat officers from a single branch."[19]

Additionally, General Bahnsen suggested that force structure should be driven by the doctrinal imperatives. He advised that there were major inconsistencies between AOE structure and Airland Battle doctrine. Implied is that AOE didn't really answer the mail. In other words, branch parochialism prevented an adequate restructure and re-design of the Army. As an example, he questioned the need to have so many different division designs, especially infantry forces -- infantry, airborne, motorized, light infantry and air assault.[20]

While both alternatives are interesting, they have been overcome by events. The Combined Arms Center is studying the next alternative to AOE -- Army 21. One can only hope that Army 21 will address the problems with AOE.

CONCLUSIONS

The AOE discussion will not close with this writing. The building of an Army is and should always be a dynamic process. Professional dialogue must continue to assess the validity of the product. This means that the force structure and unit design should achieve the desired mission result time and time again. The consequence of debate is a feeling of corporate sharing in the future of our Army.

There is an emptiness in our Army today which differs in both kind and substance from the Army before AOE. Today's emptiness is a lack of sufficient soldiers to do assigned tasks. This is in contrast to the hollowness of pre-AOE which included insufficient soldiers, numerous units manned and equipped below ALO-1, and units with missions in multiple theaters simultaneously. AOE has taken care of the mission problem and has filled AOE units to ALO-2 or higher as much as possible. However, field experience suggests that units have difficulty meeting mission tasks on a sustained basis.

A transportation analogy is useful to understand the problem and what needs to be done. Today's emptiness is a recognition that we are on the correct train. However, we need to adjust the number of cars (structure) to be able to handle the number of passengers (design) needed to reach the destination (win the war). The ticket price (resources) must be argued more on merit (operational need) than availability (relative priority to other national needs).

The CBRS provides a solid framework for determining needs in

an objective manner. The system provides a means whereby operational requirements can be justified. The fight for resources to meet the need can be pursued and fought on the merits. Resource constraints are important and will always limit the "nice to have" appetite. However, designing forces based on constraints verses operational need will tend to beg the question, "nice to have, or need to have?" A policy which says that more and more can be done with less will become a self-fulfilling prophecy. It is trite, but true to say that "the judgment call should be to stand firm for just needs and to compromise on wants." The issue is to make sure that we know the difference.

Modifying the CBRS process may have compromised the ability to distinguish between needs and wants when requesting resources. Arguments made before Congress to justify AOE will linger. If a detailed review indicates that additional resources are required, Congressmen may question whether there is a true need. Many Congressmen, who were involved in the AOE resource discussions, are still in office. However, most, if not all of the Army members involved, have moved on to other jobs.

New Army leaders will fight budget battles with Congressmen and staffers whose memories are long. The need justification must be sound and credible. Any perception of flawed arguments will be difficult to defend given the budgetary climate of Gramm-Rudman-Hollings. Witness the budget cuts which were worked out by Congress and the Executive in the Fall of 1987 for fiscal years 88 and 89.

Arguments supporting alternatives to AOE suggest a different approach. A re-design of the Army should include an affirmation of how we want to fight and not simply the structure with which we want to fight. The thirty-seven issues being worked at CACDA indicate field involvement in identifying problems. The tenacity with which we pursue the resource argument depends in large part on whether the spaces in question were fat or muscle. In either case, we must ensure that the resulting organization can meet the doctrinal requirements. That is to ask, "can the Army conduct sustained combat operations envisioned by air land battle doctrine?" Some would say these space needs provide the ability for sustained combat operations. Eliminating some of these spaces may have left a void in this important combat multiplier.

The ball is back in the court of the Senior Army leadership. Their judgment, debating ability and leadership skill will ultimately decide the fate of our Army. Their credibility with both the field and the Congress must be earned to be effective. The challenge is great. The consequence is enormous.

ENDNOTES

1. Combined Arms Combat Development Activity, Field Circular 100-1, p. 1-3.

2. Interview with Mr. Robert Keller, DAC, Deputy Director Force Design Directorate, Combined Arms Combat Development Activity, 29 January 1988.

3. CACDA FC 100-1, pp. 1-4,5.

4. CACDA Briefing, "An Army of Excellence," undated (but written initially in October 1983), cited with permission of Mr. R. Keller, CACDA, FDD.

5. U. S. Department of the Army, Training and Doctrine Command Regulation 11-7, p. 4.

6. CACDA FC 100-1, p. 1-5.

7. Ibid., p. 1-3.

8. CACDA, FDD, Briefing, "Force Structure and Design Initiatives," undated (but written in the summer of 1987), cited with permission of Mr. R. Keller, CACDA, FDD, p. 34.

9. U. S. Army Information Book, Combat Unit Analysis, dated 17 October 1986.

10. CACDA, FDD, Briefing "Force Structure and Design Initiatives," p. 37.

11. CACDA FC 100-1, p. 3-3.

12. Combined Arms Combat Development Activity, Force Design Directorate, Briefing, "AOE Current Issues," dated January 1988, cited with permission of Mr. R. Keller, CACDA, FDD,

13. Combined Arms Combat Development Activity, Force Design Directorate planning data, as of January 88, (supplied by the Soldier Support Center, National Capital Region).

14. CACDA, FDD, Briefing, "AOE Current Issues."

15. Ibid.

16. Department of the Army, Army Regulation 570-2. This regulation governs the methodology used to determining the number of people required to do work related tasks, e.g., cooks, mechanics, truck drivers, etc.

17. CACDA, HDD, Briefing, "AOE Current Issues."

18. Department of Defense, National Defense University Student Research Project, The Maneuver Oriented Corps - 1996 (MOC - 96), p. 10.

19. John C. Bahnsen, "The Kaleidoscopic U S," Armed Forces Journal International, November 85, p. 86.

20. Ibid., p. 88.